

economy, and it works every time. So now we are talking about deciding who is going to get their tax cuts and who isn't.

We should be saying clearly and simply to the American people—and especially the small businesspeople who are waiting to see what their budgets are going to be next year—we are not going to raise taxes on anybody because we want you to hire; we want you to give jobs to the people of this country. If we can extend unemployment for those who have been out of work and can't find something, and they are really trying, and we can do it in a responsible way and pay for it, hopefully—I believe if we cut taxes, that will spur the economy and pay for it.

Tomorrow, apparently, in the Senate we are going to get the House bill that passed today that cuts taxes for some but not all. So what will happen if we do what the House has suggested? Households will lose, on average, \$20,000 in total disposable personal income between 2011 and 2020. Total individual income taxes will increase by \$37 million between 2011 and 2020. Jobs will be lost and small businesses are not going to hire. I can tell you that anecdotally because I have been talking to the small business owners in my State. I was a small business owner, and I know what it takes to increase employment.

Without action by us, the death tax will return with a vengeance. A lot of people think: Oh, a death tax, that is just going to affect the heirs of rich people. I think we have to remember that estates over \$1 million will be taxed at the 55-percent rate. So many small businesses in this country are either farms or ranches, where the valuation at death on the property is going to be so much higher than the productivity on that land, and the heirs are going to be faced with selling the property to pay the taxes, which means it will no longer have any capacity for hiring people or productivity.

The same is true for small manufacturing companies. I was a small manufacturer. I can tell you my equipment was worth a whole lot more than the productivity of that equipment. You can pay for it over time, so you own the equipment. But then if you die and your heirs have to pay a huge estate tax on the value of equipment, then they are going to have to sell the equipment and, therefore, you have lost the business.

The statistics in this country of family businesses that are passed to the second generation and the third generation are abysmal. It is about 50 percent that goes to the second generation. To the third generation, it is 20 to 30 percent. Who does that hurt? Of course, it hurts the families. It also hurts the employees of those family-owned businesses. They are the ones who will be put out of work. So the estate tax going to 55 percent over \$1 million is not good public policy. It would be outrageous for us to leave

this year and go into that kind of estate tax, which is confiscatory.

I have to tell you, I think it walks away from the American dream. The American dream is that you can start from nothing in this country and you can build something and you can give the fruits of your labor to your children. That is the American dream. That is what people come here and work for 7 days a week in restaurants, to try to build something to give to their children. Who are we to take that away? That is the American dream. But it will be gone at the end of this year if we don't address that issue in Congress.

Capital gains and dividends: How many of our seniors are living on capital gains and dividends? I guarantee you, anybody who has a bank account knows you are not earning anything from that. You are not earning from cash because the interest rates are so low that many of our seniors are struggling. If they have a nest egg of stocks that is paying some dividends, then that is what many of them are living on. So we are going to raise the tax on dividends from 15 percent to 20 percent at a time when so many seniors are struggling. That is what is going to happen if we don't address the tax cuts by the end of this year.

The marriage penalty: That is my bill. I introduced relief from the marriage penalty. Why should two people working get married and go into a higher tax bracket in this country? We addressed that issue. For most people, we have eliminated the marriage penalty, but not at the end of this year, if we don't act, the marriage penalty comes back. So a policeman and a schoolteacher who marry are going to have to pay about \$1,400 more in taxes just because they want to get married—a schoolteacher and a policeman. It is an absolute fact. Is that what we want in this country?

Small business owners pay at the individual rates—a subchapter S small business. Many small businesses are created to be able to pay at the individual tax rate. Over 50 percent of the small businesses in our country pay at the individual tax rate. So now we are going to say individuals' tax rates are going to go up if they make over \$250,000, which is many of the small businesses in our country, so they are going to be paying at the higher rate. These are the things that are going to happen if we don't act.

The House passed legislation that is going to be devastating for the people who are unemployed in this country. How could we even think of doing something so drastic? I hope tomorrow when the Senate takes up the House bill that we send it back to the House and say: This is not going to go.

I will say to the President of the United States: I thought, Mr. President, that you said you were open to working on extending the taxes for everyone, and yet here we are, with the leadership of the House who just talked

to the President this week, and we have the same thing they have been talking about for all these months—no give, nothing has changed.

So here we are, it is December, and the people of America expect the leaders of Congress to address the issues that are on people's minds. We are 3 weeks from Christmas, we are 4 weeks from the end of the year. How could we leave without taking responsible action to let everyone in this country who is paying taxes know how to plan for—I would hope for 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 years?

Lastly, Mr. President, I want to say the one thing that seems to be missing in the Halls of Congress is the importance—to a family, but also to a small business especially that is thinking of expanding and hiring people—of stability and predictability. You can't say we are going to extend the tax cuts for 1 year or 2 years and do the right thing for the economy of our country. We ought to do it permanently, to be honest. But if you are not going to do it permanently, at least do it for 5 years, or, at a minimum, 2 or 3 years.

It is not going to cost the government to give these tax cuts. We are keeping it the way it is now. We are trying to spur jobs being created in our country. So when people talk about this is going to cost the government X billion dollars to let people keep the money they have earned, they are going right over the heads of the American people.

So predictability is the most important thing we can do for small businesses so they can plan, so they can say we are going to expand our product line, we are going to expand our service area. These are the things they can do if they know what their tax commitments are going to be, and if they know what their health care costs are going to be. That is what is freezing the economy right now because people don't know what to expect.

So I hope the President is listening. I hope the leadership of the Senate is listening. Most certainly, I hope the House of Representatives will come to the table and see we can do better than this, and we ought to do it before we leave this week or next week so people know what to expect; so small businesses can sit down at the end of the year and plan their businesses and create jobs in this country. That is the Christmas present people would like. They want jobs. They want to work to support their families. They do not want to live on unemployment. They do not want to live on food stamps. That is not a life. It is not a future. It is not hope. That is what they want—a future and hope for their families.

So I hope, myself, that we, the leaders of America, will give the American people what they deserve and what clearly is in the long-term best interests of their families.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.